

## Board the plane on flight Africa 1, says ACTESA CEO



Dr. Muyunda with President Barack Obama while AU Vice Chair Mr. Mwencha and Mauritian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr. Boolel look on.

Alliance for Commodity Trade in Eastern and Southern Africa (ACTESA) CEO, Cris Muyunda has told American investors it is time to 'board the plane on flight Africa 1.'

Addressing the AGOA Forum in Kansas City on August 5, during the main Business Roundtable discussion on trading and investing successfully in Africa, Dr. Muyunda, who quoted from the Barrons's business and financial weekly and African Investor, stated that it is time to invest in the “final frontier – Africa” and that “Africa is richer than you think”, respectively, told the forum that key areas ready for investment included agro-processing, warehousing and various commodities including, roots and tubers, oil seeds, livestock and fisheries, forest and natural products, tree and plantation crops and agriculture inputs.



He thanked CARGILL and Pioneer, companies that were already investing in Africa and urged others to emulate them. “Those remaining, you do have in your hands the boarding card for flight Africa 1, it's time to board the plane,” he said to thunderous applause.

Dr. Muyunda said ACTESA provided a platform for investors to interact with policy makers in trade and investment. Meanwhile, Dr. Muyunda was among two

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dozen senior African leaders who met President Barack Obama at a moving and memorable ceremony at the White House in Washington DC. The occasion was specifically reserved for Africa's top leaders visiting America during the AGOA Forum week.

Among the other leaders in the delegation to the White House were Zambian Minister of Commerce, Trade and Industry, Hon. Felix Mutati, AU Vice Chair, His Excellency Erastus Mwencha, Mauritian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr. Arvin Boolel, former Namibian Prime Minister Hage Geingob, EAC Secretary General, Ambassador Juma Mwapachu, Burundese Agriculture Minister Ferdinand Nderagakura and other senior leaders.



The US President met the African leaders in the presence of US Trade Representative Ambassador, Ron Kirk.

Earlier during the day, the senior African officials were part of the AGOA meeting that was addressed by US Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton.



The 2010 AGOA Forum was held in two states, Washington and Kansas City. The Washington forum brought together senior US administration officials, African government ministers and senior officials, the AU, RECs, US and African businesses.

The second part of the forum in Kansas City focused on agribusiness, meetings with US business leaders and site visits to US local business. Participants had opportunities to engage with US companies in order to attract investors. Zambia will host the next AGOA Forum in 2011.



## *ACTESA forges partnerships to increase rice production and trade*

The Alliance for Commodity Trade in Eastern and Southern Africa (ACTESA) has concluded MOUs with several organizations to increase regional rice output and trade.



Speaking during the 3rd Africa Rice Outlook conference in Cape Town, South Africa which attracted participation from senior global government officials, traders, processors, exporters and various private sector officials, Dr. Muyunda noted that the MOUs would assist to increase rice production in Zambia, Malawi, Uganda, Mozambique and Tanzania.

The MOUs have been reached with investment, equipment production, trading and financial institutions.

Among the entities that will work with ACTESA are, Terragold Agri Plc, Phoenix Commodities, Bourse Africa, BUHLER, Eurofins and the Coalition for African Rice Development (CARD).

"These partnerships will ensure increased investments in production, processing, trade logistics and mobilization of producers for quality rice output in the region," Dr. Muyunda said.

He noted that the eastern and southern Africa region is a net importer of rice when it could easily meet its needs. He encouraged global investors to invest in rice production and processing in Africa.

He said Africa, particularly the eastern and southern region is endowed with fertile soils and abundant water resources that can support the growing of rice. "Currently rice productivity in the ESA region is only a third of the global average at 1.12 MT/ha compared to 3.84 MT/ha global average and nowhere near the global best of 10 MT/ha," he said.

Dr. Muyunda said ACTESA was promoting structured trade in staple crops and rice was one of the commodity staples targeted for expansion in linking farmers to markets and enhancing rice processing systems in the region.

Dr. Muyunda said to create a smooth trading process in the region, efficient transit corridors were being developed, one stop border posts were being established, customs procedures modernized and road customs transit guarantees ensured.

Meanwhile, at the close of the two day conference, Dr. Muyunda in his closing remarks said, "We look forward to working with you to help in bringing our small rice producers into the large ESA market and beyond."



ACTESA is a Specialized Agency established by the COMESA Heads of State and Government to integrate small farmers into national, regional and international markets

## *A new initiative to fast-track development in the dry areas of Eastern Africa*

The Millennium Development Goals (MDG) Centre, East and Southern Africa, on 23rd July 2010 launched, in partnership with the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), an initiative to bring accelerated development to pastoralist communities living in the dry lands of 6 countries in the region.



Under the Drylands Initiative, thousands of pastoralists who have historically been neglected will benefit from animal production, infrastructure, health, education, and business projects in Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia, Somalia, Djibouti, and Sudan. The

MDG Centre is also in talks with Eritrea.

The launch took place at the end of a two-day meeting on the initiative, with the participation of African and international government and UN officials, experts, scientists, and civil society representatives. The meeting was attended by the First Lady of Uganda and Minister for Karamoja, Mrs. Janet Museveni.

The Drylands Initiative was first unveiled in January 2010, at the signing ceremony of a Memorandum of Understanding between The MDG Centre and COMESA.



Since then, different sites have been identified in participating countries and the project is about to move to the implementation phase. In northern Kenya, such field work has been ongoing in Dertu Millennium Village since 2006. Based on the promising progress recorded there, the project is being scaled up to the district and other sites have been selected too.



Poverty levels are extraordinarily high in the drylands of East Africa, and the people who endure that poverty lack access to the most basic services: education, primary health care, safe water and sanitation, veterinary care for their livestock, and security from the ravages of drought and other environmental shocks. Climate change threatens to make the situation even more dire, unless active efforts are made to promote development and community resiliency,' said Jeffrey Sachs, Director of the Earth Institute at Columbia University and Special Advisor to UN Secretary-General Ban ki-Moon on the Millennium Development Goals.

'Fortunately, the people of the drylands are hard-working and are eager to invest in a sustainable future.

With targeted efforts in critical areas — for example, livestock management and marketing, scaled-up health care, new educational opportunities, and upgraded infrastructure, pastoralist communities can achieve a major gain in productivity and economic wellbeing.

This is what the Drylands Initiative sets out to achieve. Moreover, bringing economic improvement and climate resiliency will not only raise living standards but will also promote peace. Recent history has amply demonstrated that many of the conflicts in the drylands result from water stress, hunger, and other vulnerabilities of the drylands. Investing in drylands development is therefore also investing in peace and security,' added Professor Sachs, one of the initiators of the project.



COMESA Secretary General, Mr. Sindiso Ngwenya, said: 'We are happy to partner with The MDG Centre in this endeavor.

Accordingly, our specialized agency, the Alliance for Commodity Trade in Eastern and Southern Africa (ACTESA), will work very closely with the Centre to ensure that there are improvements in the livelihoods of communities living in the drylands.'

'Building upon the success of the Millennium Villages Project, the Drylands Initiative will bring multi-sectoral development to isolated, yet sizeable communities.

With the right approaches, such as mobile technology and access to markets, we hope that pastoralist communities will be able to integrate into the mainstream economy and record progress on the Millennium Development Goals,' concluded the director of The MDG Centre, Dr. Belay Begashaw.

The Initiative will operate at a regional level, recognizing that the drylands of Eastern Africa form a single economic space and that challenges and opportunities do not stop at national boundaries.

ACTESA CEO met with COMESA Director of Gender Ms. Emiliana Tembo (pictured below) to discuss strategies for mainstreaming gender in the COMESA Regional Agro-inputs Program (COMRAP).



## EVENTS

### African Agricultural Markets Program (AAMP) Plans for Fourth Policy Seminar/Training Course

"Risk Management in African Agriculture: Taking Stock of What Has and Hasn't Worked" Crossroads Hotel, Lilongwe, Malawi from the 6th to 10th September, 2010.

AAMP is a regional program that supports enhanced access to regional markets, trade and private sector participation in agriculture, vital for agricultural development in Africa.

AAMP will be hosting its fourth event on Agricultural Risk Management.

The agricultural sector is one sector that is exposed to a variety of risks and these include climate and weather risks, natural catastrophes pest and diseases, which cause highly variable production outcomes. In market-oriented agricultural sectors, farmers choose which crops to grow and how best to grow them by considering potential profits and potential risks. In general, there is a tradeoff between potential profit and risk. Successful farmers will be those that choose high-profit activities and successfully manage associated risk.

Because of their inherent political and economic consequences, managing these risks is central to achieving desired agricultural productivity and growth. The policy makers, practitioners, and food policy researchers have long debated over the ways and means of managing these risks.

### THE ACTESA 4TH STAKEHOLDERS AND PARTNERS MEETING, 9TH – 11TH NOVEMBER 2010, DAR ES SALAAM TANZANIA

The Alliance for Commodity Trade in Eastern and Southern Africa (ACTESA) will be holding its fourth Stakeholders and Partner meeting scheduled for the 9th – 11th of November 2010, in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

The agenda, and conference details, will be communicated shortly.

All ACTESA stakeholders (Farmers Organisations, Traders, Processors and partner financial institutions) are invited to participate at this important forum.

For more information on ACTESA and its programs visit our Website on :[www.actesacomesa.org](http://www.actesacomesa.org)